

# **POLICY / COMMUNITY AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING**

**OCTOBER 6, 2009**

**Oliver Administration Building**

## **Present**

**Subcommittee: Diana Campbell, Chair, Denise Arsenault and John Bento**

**School Committee and Administration: Edward Mara and Melinda Thies**

**Diana Campbell called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.**

## **Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag**

## **Approval of Minutes**

**MOTION: Denise Arsenault motioned to approve the minutes to the August 11, 2009 meeting; John Bento seconded; the motion passed by a vote of 3 to 0.**

## **Superintendent's Continuous Improvement Plan**

**Diana said the Superintendent's goals should align with the School Committee's goals which should align with the District Strategic Plan.**

**John and Denise will continue to collect suggestions for Committee goals, putting a deadline of October 26 for submission, so the Subcommittee can discuss it further at their next meeting on**

**November 2. The collection of goals will be put into the School Committee packets on October 29.**

## **Policy Review List**

### **Sexual Orientation Discrimination**

**Melinda has a letter from the Commissioner detailing the Board of Regents' Policy Statement on Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation; our statement is on the bottom of District letterhead. The Committee discussed options to implement: separate policy, but we do not need a policy statement if it is the law because it goes without saying that we will follow the law; add it to our harassment and bullying policy; solicit input from the community if families would take offense; move it up from the bottom of our letterhead. The District has not had many complaints on this issue, in fact a gay student had remarked to Ed how well he is accepted at the high school. The subject is covered in the health curriculum in terms of sensitivity to differences and tolerance. Ed and Melinda will address this with Don Rebello and Jaime Crowley.**

**After discussion it was decided to insert the District's statement —“The Bristol Warren Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, race, religion, national origin, color, disability or sexual orientation in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.” into Policy JGF Prohibition Against Harassment, Bullying and Dating Violence as the intent of the policy.**

**MOTION:** Denise Arsenault motioned to forward the revision of Policy JGF to include the non-discrimination statement to the full Committee for a first reading. John Bento seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Chemical Health Policy**

Ed said a policy has already been worked on by the high school and the Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force; he suggests tabling to the next meeting so all can be present. Diana agreed.

**MOTION:** Denise Arsenault motioned to continue discussion to next month. John Bento seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Technology Policies**

Diana would like to see technology and curriculum integration; should we have a policy that technology should be a priority. Melinda does not see this as a policy statement; within the math curriculum we have to provide what technology resources would be available, so it is addressed. Diana was thinking technology should be integrated more into the way the teacher teaches, and beyond math and science, integrated through the whole curriculum. Melinda explained it is within their content standard. Ed added the students are tech savy and teachers use palms, although there are still a few reluctant ones. Melinda mentioned smart boards are in the math and science classrooms at the middle and high schools, we have a tech specialist on the elementary level and a library media specialist; this District is technology rich compared to other districts and we must keep that in the forefront. Ed confirmed that technology is well covered in the

**new Strategic Plan. John asked about training for teachers; Melinda said that has been worked on internally. It was agreed that technology is adequately addressed, there is no need for action or further discussion.**

### **Additions to Policy Review List**

**Student Outreach at the High School: Diana and Melinda have met with Don about getting a student as an ex-officio member of the School Committee; Don's idea is for five students (one representative for each grade and one ad hoc) to be elected, to rotate at meetings. Diana said Marj believes we would need a policy to create an ex-officio member. Ed will poll other districts through his superintendents' list serve. Diana would like to have elections in January.**

**John suggested sending a School Committee representative to the student government meetings. Diana felt they deal more with social aspects of student life, like parade floats. Denise said that by them coming to us, it is a way to begin to make a connection from high school to what adults are doing. Diana and Melinda further explained the students would represent the school and give a report to the Committee, which would open dialogue on what was on the students' minds and connects students to a civic organization; hopefully they would report back to their boards. John asked if the student government works well and felt that students would be more inclined to participate if they are given a responsibility; perhaps we should**

visit them once or twice a year; student involvement and understanding is a good thing. Melinda said the student organizations are more on a social level, but when sensitive issues are touched upon, they will come forward. John said there may be some students inspired toward politics who could be involved in policy making. Diana stated that the Chemical Health Policy involved students. Ed remarked that Paul Silva is always in favor of the development of student government; Ed supports this and he believes there are students who can do the job. Diana said we maybe should make a point when they are elected to invite them to our discussions. John added that Ed or Melinda could mentor these students; Diana said Don Rebello would be a great mentor because he sits on the Somerset School Committee. Discussion will continue.

### **Next Meeting**

**Monday, November 2, 2009, 6:30 PM at Oliver**

### **Adjournment**

**MOTION:** At 7:45 PM, Denise Arsenault motioned to adjourn; John Bento seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**/ca**